

GOING THE DISTANCE

By Brandon J. Mendelson

When you come to college, doing your homework ranks somewhere between flossing your teeth and watching the weather channel during your free time.

You want to drink, you want to make friends, and you want to hook up, right? Isn't that why God invented college in the first place?

With this in mind there are some college students who are looking for something more than a one-night stand. And a few of those lucky individuals, may find themselves in a relationship that will last longer than Ryan Seacrest's career.

Let's pretend you left your dorm room long enough to make friends. Somewhere along the way you met a man or woman you thought could stand your existence for more than one night. You start to date and realize, "Hey, they enjoy the same junk I do, this is a match made in heaven." Everything in the relationship is going well, and then bam! Summer vacation comes. Now what are you going to do?

You could break up with the person. Of course, this would result not only in immediate heartache, but in very awkward encounters during the next semester. It could also lead to restraining orders...arson charges...jury trials...I digress.

No. You're the type of person who

wants to go the distance. If you're that committed, you're going to need a darn good plan to keep this relationship going throughout the break.

First let's see what you're up against. Summer— It's hot, it's sticky, bugs like to feast on your flesh, very bad movies are released, and you're either working a summer job, or sitting on your butt playing the home game of "who can drown the fastest in their own sweat". You and your significant other may also find yourselves surrounded by attractive people wearing little to nothing, and — as scientists like to remind us — the hot weather makes us hot for those people.

If this long-distance relationship is to have any legs, you need to promise each other that once a week you will make contact. Even if it's a five-minute phone call, the once-a-week contact point is the bare minimum for your summer relationship survival. Fortunately, we have plenty of ways to contact one another. Don't have a computer? Take a trip to your public library, or make a phone call. Live in a colonial reenactment village? Take up the lost art of letter writing and pen a dispatch telling your significant other how much you love them.

Once you've established your once-a-week contact time, you could plan a trip to see your lover. Unless cash is not an issue, this may be problematic for those of you

dating people from other countries such as Brazil, the U.K., and New Jersey. The biggest obstacles you will face are getting a car that can make the trip, and high gas prices. If you plan to visit your significant other, you're going to have to dip into your summer earnings and prepare to ride the bus. The earth will thank you for reducing carbon dioxide emissions by not popping open Yellow Stone National Park like a zit.

Perhaps the most crucial parts of making those ninety days bearable are the unexpected things. I think the best thing (especially if you're a guy, because the odds are your girlfriend won't expect something like this) is to snail mail something to that significant other of yours. Taking the time to find an envelope, buy a stamp, locate the post office and leave the house to go there shows some thought and care. What do you snail mail? Well preferably not snails, but it could be anything from dirty socks to flowers and candy that reminds you of your significant other. There's always the quintessential mix-tape (or is that mix-CD?). Be creative. And, if you aren't the creative type, log on to Google and steal someone else's ideas.

Keep these tips in mind and remember to go above and beyond the bare minimum to keep your sweetie happy. A happy sweetie is a happy sweet-or!



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